

1. (Amended) A method of hydrocracking hydrocarbon oils, comprising the steps of:

pre-contacting a hydrocracking catalyst with a solution containing an organic nitrogen compound in a range of 10 ppm to 100 ppm by nitrogen weight; and

contacting a feed oil substantially comprised of hydrocarbon oils and hydrogen with the hydrocracking catalyst that has been contacted with the organic nitrogen compound in order to obtain a hydrocarbon oil with a lower boiling point than that of the feed oil wherein the concentration of nitrogen in the feed oil is not more than 10 ppm;

the organic nitrogen compound being an organic nitrogen compound having a boiling point that is lower than a 50% distillation temperature of the feed oil and that is higher than 200°C.

2. (Amended) A method of hydrocracking hydrocarbon oils derived from petroleum comprising the steps of:

contacting a petroleum fraction containing an organic nitrogen compound in a range of 10 ppm to 100 ppm by nitrogen weight and having a 25% distillation temperature that is lower than the 50% distillation temperature of a feed oil substantially comprised of hydrocarbon oils and that is higher than 200°C with a hydrocracking catalyst wherein the

concentration of nitrogen in the feed oil is not more than 10 ppm; and

contacting the feed oil and hydrogen with the hydrocracking catalyst that has been contacted with the petroleum fraction in order to obtain a hydrocarbon oil with a boiling point lower than that of the feed oil.

7. (Amended) The hydrocracking method according to any one of Claims 2 or 4 wherein, as a result of contacting the petroleum fraction with hydrocracking catalyst, the hydrocracking catalyst contains 0.01% to 1% by nitrogen weight of the organic nitrogen compound per catalyst weight.